

BEFORE THE  
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268-0001

Proposed Amendments to Filing Requirements

Docket No. RM2003-1

COMMENTS OF  
ALLIANCE OF NONPROFIT MAILERS,  
AMERICAN BUSINESS MEDIA,  
AOL TIME WARNER, INC.,  
DOW JONES & COMPANY, INC.,  
MAGAZINE PUBLISHERS OF AMERICA, INC.,  
THE MCGRAW-HILL COMPANIES, AND  
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION  
(FEBRUARY 12, 2003)

In accordance with PRC Order No. 1355 (December 13, 2002), Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers (ANM), American Business Media (ABM), AOL Time Warner, Inc. (AOL-TW), Dow Jones & Company, Inc. (Dow Jones), Magazine Publishers of America, Inc. (MPA), The McGraw-Hill Companies (McGraw-Hill), and National Newspaper Association (NNA) submit these comments in support of the proposed amendments to the Commission's filing requirements that would require the Postal Service to file, as support for its rate and classification requests, testimony providing both a road map of how witnesses' testimony interrelates, and identification of all material changes affecting cost attribution methodology, volume projections, or rate design. These proposed amendments are a good initial response to some of the issues raised in the ratemaking Summit, jointly sponsored by the Postal Service and the Postal Rate Commission in May and June 2002. The Commission should be commended for its proposed rule change.

As the Commission notes, "[a]s is well known to anyone participating in previous omnibus proceedings, the [10-month] procedural schedule . . . is exceedingly tight, imposing extraordinary demands on all active participants. The Commission appreciates the litigation burdens assumed by all participants in omnibus rate

proceedings. Over time, those burdens appear to have grown dramatically.” PRC Order No. 1355 (December 12, 2002) at 4. We fully agree that the Postal Service does yeoman’s work throughout omnibus rate proceedings, but as the Commission notes:

Participants are also subject to substantial demands. To understand the Postal Service’s proposals, they must review its direct case, prepare discovery, and, if appropriate, cross examine witnesses and file testimony in response to the Postal Service, all within a few months of the docketing of the Postal Service’s Request.

Id. at 5.

We are particularly hopeful that road map testimony contemplated by the proposed amendments will enable participants to grasp the intricacies of the Postal Service’s filing more quickly, without resorting to “exploratory” discovery as has been necessary in the past. The sooner participants can focus discovery on substantive issues of concern to them, the more effectively they will be able to use the relatively short time available under the statutory 10-month procedural requirement. Further, while the proposed amendments place additional burdens on the Postal Service with respect to its initial filing, we anticipate the Service will benefit as the case proceeds with more focused, and hopefully less burdensome, discovery requests from participants.

Finally, we note that some of us have joined in past omnibus rate cases in filing joint trial briefs intended to serve as a “road map” for interrelated testimony addressing issues of common interest to the Periodicals community. See, e.g., Trial Brief of Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers, American Business Media, Coalition of Religious Press Associations, Dow Jones & Company, Inc., Magazine Publishers of American, Inc., National Newspaper Association, The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., and Time Warner, Inc. (June 29, 2000) (Docket No. R2000-1). While our testimony certainly has not been as voluminous or intricate as that required of the Postal Service, we trust that the past use of the trial briefs encouraged by the Commission has aided all participants in understanding the testimony we have filed.

Respectfully submitted,

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